

Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 COME-00 AID-20 NIC-01 OMB-01

PC-04 DRC-01 /158 W

----- 043607

R 202010Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5780

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

CINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT OF SPAIN 1480

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT TD

SUBJECT: POLITICAL POT BUBBLES

REF: POS 1472

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: WHILE IT LOOKS INCREASINGLY LIKE HUDSON-PHILLIPS
AS NEXT PRIME MINISTER, WILLIAMS MAY STILL BE HEARD FROM.
THE OPPOSITION APPEARS TO BE FINDING ITS PREELECTORAL FORM.
END SUMMARY.

1. WITH KARL HUDSON-PHILLIPS PREDICTABLY SWAMPING KAMALUDDIN
MOHAMMED IN RACE FOR NOMINATIONS FOR PNM LEADERSHIP, DRAMA
NOW SHIFTS TO DECEMBER 2 RESUMPTION OF THE PARTY'S GENERAL
CONVENTION. KARLISTS ARE SEEKING TO MAKE DEAL WITH MOHAMMED
(PROBABLY OFFERING DEPUTY PRIME MINISTERSHIP) TO PERMIT
ELECTION OF HUDSON-PHILLIPS AS PARTY LEADER BY ACCLAMATION.

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REPORTEDLY THEY ARE NOW ALSO WORKING TO BROADEN HIS APPEAL TO

EAST INDIANS IN REALIZATION THAT LATENT RACIAL ANTAGONISMS ARE SURFACING DURING THIS PERIOD OF POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY.

2. ALTHOUGH MOMENTUM AND LOGIC FAVOR HUDSON-PHILLIPS' BECOMING PRIME MINISTER, WILLIAMS' INTENTIONS REMAIN UNKNOWN VARIABLE IN EQUATION. IN ADDITION TO HIS DISLIKE OF HUDSON-PHILLIPS, THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE HE WOULD LIKE TO STAY ON. WITH HELP OF ANTI-KARLIST SIR ELLIS CLARKE (WHO MAY BE TRYING TO SAVE HIS OWN SKIN), SCENARIO WAS APPARENTLY WORKED OUT WHEREBY IRO SPEARHEADED A DRAFT-WILLIAMS MOVEMENT TO PROMOTE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND PILOT NEW CONSTITUTION INTO BEING. PRE-SUMABLY, WILLIAMS WOULD, UNDER THIS SCENARIO, CONTINUE AS PRIME MINISTER INDEPENDENT OF AND ABOVE PNM, COUNTING ON RELUCTANT SUPPORT OF HOUSE MAJORITY. (INDEED LAST WEEK MAHABIR AND PREVATT FLATLY STATED IN PRIVATE THAT WILLIAMS WILL STAY ON). WILLIAMS HAS, HOWEVER, SUFFERED SERIES OF REBUFFS IN PNM, WHILE EVENTS AND TIME HAVE, IN OUR VIEW, PROBABLY CARRIED HIM BEYOND THE POSSIBILITY OF GARNERING NECESSARY ACQUIESCENCE IN SUCH A COURSE. AS TO OTHER POSSIBILITIES FOR WILLIAMS, ONE SCHOOL OF THOUGHT HOLDS THAT HE WILL RETIRE ON SCHEDULE, FULLY EXPECTING THAT DETERIORATING CONDITIONS WILL ENSURE DEMAND FOR HIS RETURN. ANOTHER HOLDS THAT HE WILL CALL ELECTIONS IN NEAR FUTURE IN HOPE AND EXPECTATION THAT KARLIST PNM WOULD BE DEFEATED.

3. OPPOSITION GROUPINGS ARE BEGINNING TO ASSUME THEIR "PRE-ELECTORAL" SHAPE. THE TRADITIONAL AND ESSENTIALLY CONSERVATIVE EAST INDIAN OPPOSITION APPEARS TO BE COALESCING AROUND THE NUCLEUS OF THE PRESENT UDLP, PROBABLY PICKING UP VARIOUS MINOR GROUPINGS SUCH AS THE LIBERAL PARTY AND THE UNITED PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION GROUP OF RICHARDSON), AND CONCEIVABLY ASHFORD SINANAN, WHO HAS JUST RETURNED BUT IS TALKING OF FORMING A NEW PARTY. THE MULTI-RACIAL AND MODERATELY LEFT-LINING DAC IS REPORTEDLY GROWING STRONGER AND STANDS MOST TO BENEFIT FROM PNM DEFECTIONS, UNLESS RACE BECOMES EVEN MORE STRONGLY A CRITERION FOR PARTY LOYALITIES. THE TAPIA MOVEMENT HAS DECIDED TO BEND ITS "UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICS" INTO A PARTY-LIKE MOLD IN ORDER TO CONTEST FOR POWER. IT STILL REMAINS TOO "INTELLECTUAL" TO ENJOY WIDE SUPPORT. EARLY STATEMENTS SHOW THAT ECONOMIC NATIONALISM IS PREDICTABLY PROVING A POPULAR PLANK FOR EACH

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OF THESE GROUPS. HOWEVER, PERSONALITIES AND RACE REMAIN FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN ISSUES IN TRINIDAD POLITICS.

MARSHALL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: hilburpw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973PORTO01480
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: PORT OF SPAIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731122/aaaaaqgo.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: POS 1472
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hilburpw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Jan-2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <31-Jan-2002 by hilburpw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLITICAL POT BUBBLES
TAGS: PINT, TD
To: STATE BRIDGETOWN
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005